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great interest and value to science valuable to them directly, it is as much as you can hope for. Now what are you going to do with the other 95 per cent? that is the point.

I came here for the purpose of learning from you, how you do your work; how it is done in the most expeditious way. In these times, when our courses are crowded and taken up with various studies, we must do our work in the shortest possible space of time. How are we going to bring a knowledge, say of French and German—take those two principal members of the family of modern languages, outside of our own—how shall we bring, I say, to English speaking students of America, a fluent, easy reading knowledge of French and German in the shortest space of time? If there is a method by which young men who began the study of French in September of this year, can have already read two, three or four volumes of 100 pages each and understood it—and there is—if there is a method by which that can be done, then I would like, at a proper time, to hear such method explained. How shall we do it? Let me suggest to the executive committee that something be put into the program for another year—something like what we call the Round Table—a general exchange of experience, &c., that would be of great value to all the teachers here assembled. I should be very glad to know how other men do this work. I do not believe in any stereotyped way of teaching. I believe that the teacher must be enthusiastic and teach from his heart—not from the methods of any other man or woman—but it helps us all to know what others' methods are; and if we can have some comparison of views, I think it will be a great gain.

I was glad to see the announcement to-day that there is a prospect, another year, of the adoption of a proposed uniform course of study of the modern languages in the colleges and in preparatory schools. That is a step in the right direction. I hope that in the future something will be done towards making this Association valuable to us all as a means of communicating to each other our experience, without any intention to impose our views upon others, but simply to state what we do, and what results we produce, and when we get home and think it over, if we learn anything valuable we can put it in practice in our own way.

### 15. The Preparation of Modern Language Teachers for American Institutions.<sup>1</sup> By Professor E. H. Babbitt, of Columbia College, N. Y.

The best teacher of modern languages for some purposes requires no conscious preparation at all. For all children below the age at which they enter our secondary schools, the objective point is the ability to speak the

<sup>1</sup> This paper was read at the last annual meeting of the Association (see *Proceedings* for 1891, p. xlv).

language—an art merely, which has nothing to do with any scientific knowledge, and which is best acquired from a French or German nurse-maid, or some such person, to whom the language is an inheritance, and its fluent use a necessity of nature.

The lowest grade in our educational system where we find work in modern languages for which professional teachers need professional preparation, is in the secondary schools. Here we meet at once the commonest problem of all which we have to consider in our work. Given a class of boys or young men, who have perhaps two years on an average to study a modern language, how shall we shape our instruction so that they may get the best returns from the work they can do in that limited time? It seems to be generally agreed that a practical reading knowledge of the language is the main end for such students, both because it is the most valuable acquisition that can be made in the time to spare, and because, in ordinary circumstances, this line of work forms the only feasible basis for uniform and successful class-room instruction. At the same time this plan allows those students who wish to pursue the study of the language further, in other lines, to use all the work they have already done, and also allows full scope for the really very valuable mental discipline to which I called attention in my paper last year.<sup>1</sup>

In many cases this practical elementary work is not begun till after the students are in college. Here we meet students who have already had a good deal of linguistic training in their study of the classics, and thus differ from the boys in the secondary and scientific schools, to whom a foreign language is a new thing. For instance, with a class of college students who have done the usual amount of thinking over their conditional sentences in Latin and Greek, the subject of conditional sentences in German can be disposed of in a lesson or two; but a class of boys who meet for the first time this matter of general grammar must spend weeks in getting it cleared up, whatever the language may be that furnishes the material for study. Much more can therefore be expected in the way of quantity and quality of work from college students than from the others referred to; it is quite possible to give a class of them a sufficient knowledge of French in one year, or of German in two years, to enable them to use text-books in those languages.

The majority of our college students never go beyond this point in the subject. Those who do pursue it either as a college or a university study—as a factor in a general liberal education, or with the intention of teaching the subject. For the larger class who pursue it as a culture-study, several lines of work are possible. Practice in expression in a foreign language, especially French, gives excellent discipline for the linguistic sense. Philology proper belongs rather to the university side of the subject, but an enthusiastic teacher often draws college students into it with

<sup>1</sup>*Publications*, Vol. VI, No. 1.

good results. But the greatest part by far of the instruction for this class of students comes under the head of that much-abused word, literature.

There is no line of study that will make a college sophomore into a competent literary critic. Nothing will do that but a certain number of years spent in contact with the life and thought of the world, and a proper use and development of a sound judgment which must be present to begin with. And yet there is no more responsive soil on which to sow the seeds of culture than the mind of a student at this age, and few better opportunities for doing so than come from just such courses as are given in the third and fourth year work in modern languages at our colleges—courses based on the study of the best works written in those languages, with all the side-lights from philology, literary criticism, philosophy and history, which the teacher can bring to bear from all the resources of his own study and his own intellectual life.

As to university instruction, it is only necessary to say that it must be of the most thorough and special kind. The future teacher must have the discipline of feeling bottom somewhere in the sea of learning. Now as the bottom comes nearer the surface in the region of philology than elsewhere in our department, students naturally turn their attention largely in that direction. This is legitimate, if only one is sure of a sufficient intellectual stature to be able to stand on that bottom and have a respectable mental horizon.

Viewed from the teacher's standpoint, university work in the modern languages in this country forms but an almost infinitesimal part of the whole body of work in the field. In very many of our colleges the instruction does not go beyond elementary work. And even in those few institutions where real university work is done, the amount of work in this particular field is less than in others, on account of the special reasons for studying in this line abroad. The records of the work done in modern languages at our universities will show that very little of it is beyond the grade of college work, and that there is seldom a genuine demand for any advanced course which cannot perfectly well be given by any teacher who is properly prepared for this college work.

A proper preparation for college teaching means, however, much more than is generally demanded by those who employ teachers. I wish to call your attention to an apparently trivial matter which has unexpectedly deep significance on this point.

It is a commonplace to all members of this Association, that knowing how to speak a language and knowing how to read it are two very different things. It sounds like a sweeping statement to say that no one who has not taught the subject knows how great this difference really is, but I will even venture to say that many who are teachers of modern languages fail to see the importance of the distinction. Speaking a language is as purely an art as is playing a musical instrument. The art of speaking a language not one's own is useful to many people who wish to communicate with

those who speak it; it is further regarded as a pretty accomplishment for young ladies and others who may possibly make little or no practical use of it. This art has been taught for centuries by a large and more or less respectable body of persons, and their instruction has its traditions and methods, which are embodied in text-books of the Ollendorf kind.

Now when some years ago there arose a general demand for instruction in modern languages in our colleges, the college authorities went to the young ladies' boarding-schools, or wherever these foreign language teachers were to be found, and set the best they could get of them to doing the work in the colleges. They brought their traditions with them, and continued to emphasize the education of the ear, and to quarrel, with the intolerance of all empiricists, over minor matters of accent and pronunciation. Their methods were accepted generally without question, and held the field for a long time, as they do still among the laity.

Occasionally, however, for lack of a Frenchman or German to teach his language, an American teacher who had perhaps been abroad, or had more than the usual amount of instruction in a modern language, was set to teaching it. Such teachers, being less sure of their knowledge of the foreign language than of English, did their work on a translation basis and taught their pupils to read, rather than speak, the language; and the reading knowledge of students taught in this way was often better than that of those who had spent much more time under the old plan. Whatever readiness in speaking the latter might have acquired did not appear under any examination test, nor as meeting any need in the way of foundation for further studies. Now, the fact that the pupils of any fair teacher who had a smattering of a foreign language could meet the tests prepared by those who held the position of the only authorities on the subject, and the fact that these latter treated their work from the same point of view that musicians and writing-masters treat theirs, tended to throw the whole line of work into disrepute, and to establish the impression, which, as I said above, is still in full force among the laity (to which we may safely reckon most college trustees and many college presidents), that any kind of a "Dutchman" or "dago," or broken-down minister, is competent to give what has seemed to be the recognized quality of instruction in the subject. This impression still prevails to a lamentable extent in many quarters, but the day of better things is coming, and the next generation of modern language teachers will do better work than the present one.

The only effective teacher in any field is the one who has thoroughly taken his professional bearings—who has adopted the work from the honest conviction that he is fitted by nature to do it, and intends to make it his life-work. A teacher who is an enthusiast in his subject is better than one who is not, but no amount of enthusiasm for a subject can blind a true teacher to the fundamental fact of his calling—that the subject is taught for its effect on the minds of his pupils, not that their minds exist as a medium for propagating knowledge of the subject. The field of modern languages

belongs emphatically to the pedagogue rather than to the scientific enthusiast. Nine-tenths of the work done must always be of an elementary nature. Such work involves a great deal of drudgery, from which in itself there is no legitimate escape. The standard of perfection in the practical knowledge of a modern language is so evident and so near at hand, that any man of scholarly tendencies is sure to be so far in advance of his pupils that he is liable to chafe under the unavoidable repetitions and task-work, unless his pedagogical is greater than his scientific interest—unless his subject-matter is merely a means to an end, and his greatest professional satisfaction comes from turning out each year's class a little better trained than the last.

But a language teacher has some relief from drudgery which a teacher of mathematics, for instance, has not. The most elementary language-study has a connection with human thought and interest, which no study of mere things can have; and thus even here, though of course in a much greater degree as we approach literature rather than mere language-drill, the personality of the teacher comes into play as a culturing factor. A teacher is capable of inspiring and uplifting a class just about in proportion to the size of his personality as a man of culture. There is no field in the profession where a man of thoroughly catholic mind and a sure sense of the meaning of the world's thought can do more to bring a class up from their intellectual level towards his own; and none where a mere pedant, who has grammatical or philological hobbies to ride, can waste more golden opportunities. And yet few subjects make so great demands upon the teacher in the way of wide and definite knowledge. The standard of correct use for a language is of course an empirical matter, but just for that reason those who uphold the standard are the more intolerant of variations from it. The amount of practical ability in handling a language required from a teacher is much greater in the case of living than of dead languages. No teacher of a modern language can be thoroughly efficient unless his command of it as a practical medium of thought is sufficient to enable him to think in it and feel its idiom pretty thoroughly his own.

And on the other hand—aside from the fact that no person can manage a class of American boys unless he can think in English as readily as they can—no one can make translation work of any value to his pupils on its most valuable side, unless his English is really good English—better than theirs is likely to be, as boys on the average come to us now.

And last but not least, no teacher can be thoroughly inspiring and useful to his pupils whose knowledge of his subject is not so thorough and extensive as to give them a genuine respect for his attainments as a scholar. It is not so very important whether his special work has been done in the exact lines of his teaching, provided his knowledge in those lines is sufficient to meet completely all questions that may arise. He ought, however, to know the language he is teaching, not only practically, but also historically, to be familiar with the nearest related languages, and, on the literary side, to have a good notion of the chapter in human life and thought which pro-

duced the works he is to study. It is hardly necessary to say that no live teacher will let a year pass without making some additions to this fund of exact knowledge which he possesses and can use in his work.

I do not believe that a teacher can be notably deficient in any of the five directions that I have indicated, without impairing seriously his professional usefulness—so seriously as to shut him out from the very foremost rank in the profession. The discussion of the first of these five heads belongs, however, rather to a paper on the preparation of teachers in general than here. This is also true of the second, except that breadth of culture in the personality of the teacher counts for more here than in fields which have to do more with things, and less with human relations, and that a special topic arises out of the question of foreign-born teachers.

To the unprofessional mind, it seems to be almost a matter of course that the person who knows a language best is one to whom it is the mother-tongue, and therefore that such persons should naturally teach it. If, however, we look to those countries where the science of education has been longest and most carefully studied, we find the settled policy of employing natives who have been abroad to study modern foreign languages, to teach those languages in the schools. And in spite of the stubborn resistance of the lay mind, which I have referred to already, this policy is rapidly gaining ground in the higher institutions in this country. I cannot go exhaustively into the reasons for this course, but some of the considerations are as follows: A person who comes to a country at an adult age is a foreigner, and generally remains a foreigner in his ways of thinking and feeling and living. I said before that the personality of the teacher is the most important factor in his professional activity; if his personality is such that it fails to find the best points of touch with the personalities of his students, then he fails to get that sympathetic community of thought on which so much depends. And if, as is so often the case with foreign-born teachers, he never acquires that command of English which makes him superior to them in their own medium of thought, he remains to that extent under a handicap which impairs his usefulness. These considerations do not apply, be it observed, to men who come to this country young enough to become thoroughly Americanized in character and language, before they enter upon their work. Some of our very best teachers belong to this class of men.

Another point, perhaps less well understood, but of more general application, may be illustrated by a case which came under my own observation. A careful and conscientious teacher, a German by birth and education, who had learned French at school as a foreign language, taught it, as was admitted by all, much better than German, his mother-tongue, which he undoubtedly spoke, and used in every way, much better than French. It is self-evident that a man who has been driven in a close carriage through the streets of a city, cannot direct another regarding them, so well as one who has made his way on foot, with map in hand. The fact that a person who has acquired any knowledge without being obliged to give any thought

to the process, cannot impart that knowledge so well as one who has followed the steps, is always a great drawback to the effective teaching of a language by those to whom it is the mother-tongue. This drawback can be overcome only by long practice in actual teaching; and during the process the pupils must inevitably suffer. It is these difficulties of adjustment which have brought about, through the extensive employment of foreigners to teach their languages in our schools, the unsatisfactory conditions as to the pace of work to which I referred last year, and it is largely the increase in the employment of those who are Americans by education at least, which is leading to an improvement in this respect. The matter is after all a question of individuals, and a good deal might be said on the text that a man who is good for anything is likely to find employment at home, and so the men we are likely to get to teach in our schools are of a better grade if they are of home production.

It seems on the whole then to be a reasonable demand that our modern language teachers shall have received their general education in our country, or at least enough of it to be thoroughly in touch with our institutions and with the spirit of our students, and to have an unhampered use of the English language.

For an American to acquire a thorough practical knowledge of a foreign language, only one course is adequate. He must live a considerable time in the country where it is spoken. There is no possible substitute which will accomplish his object. Any attempt to create a French or German atmosphere in this country is pretty sure to be a failure. Take into consideration only the relatively unimportant matter of pronunciation; however perfect a pronunciation a foreigner may bring to this country, a very few years' residence here will almost invariably give it an English shading, which becomes stronger the more he speaks English, and the more he uses his own language among those who speak it with an English accent.<sup>1</sup> In a circle made up of these two classes of people, it is perfectly possible for an American to acquire a startling fluency in a sort of French "after the scole of Stratford-atte-Bowe," which no Frenchman can understand unless (like most Paris shopkeepers) he knows English pretty well, and which years of residence in Paris will never correct. The phonetic facts of the pronunciation of a foreign language are never thoroughly understood until one has lived among those who speak that language and no other. The same relation of things holds in regard to the use of words and idioms; differences in social life, differences in the material conditions of things, which

<sup>1</sup>A case in point is that of two ladies, both college graduates, who "spoke French very well." They went to hear a lecture by M. Coquelin, when he was in this country. As they came out, one was heard to say "How much of it could you understand?" "Isn't it funny," said the other, "I can understand Professor ——'s lectures on French Literature *perfectly*, but I didn't understand a *single thing* to-day."



cause words to connote different ideas from the words used to render them, cannot be thoroughly felt, and a teacher cannot be sure of his ground in dealing with them, till he has lived among both sets of the conditions which determine these differences. No man is master of a language until he can think in it, and no one really thinks in a language unless he has lived a fair length of time where it is the recognized medium of thought.

On higher ground, too, this matter is important. The modern language teacher is just now in this country, almost above all other members of his profession, the apostle of tolerance and the foe of narrowness in all its shapes, religious, political, and social. I need only to touch this point to remind any one who has lived abroad of the inevitable logic of circumstances which brings this about. Take the most proper boarding-school mistress, and the most argument-proof teacher from a sectarian Western college, who have acquired their French and German from the most carefully expurgated editions, and taught accordingly—let them go abroad and have every means to follow out the nearest desire of their hearts; let her spend her whole time in Paris and divide it between her American friends and the shops, seeing as little of those horrid Frenchmen as possible, and come home with twelve trunks full of gowns, and let him spend his in a carefully selected German-American *pension* in a university town, divide it between his landlady's daughters and the lecture-rooms, and come home with a long beard and a Ph. D.—and yet both of them, in spite of themselves, even if they still uphold their early principles that the theatre is on the straight road to perdition, and that beer is a deadly poison, will have acquired a new and a broader view of human life, and their pupils will get good from the change. And if you send over a young man of good parts, with an honest purpose to see all the sides of life he can, and sufficient culture already in stock to interpret what he sees, he will come home with convictions which make him, for the rest of his life, at least a silent force opposed to sectarian intolerance, "spread-eagle" politics, and Philistinism in every form.

It seems to me that this matter of residence abroad is as important for us as is laboratory work for a chemist, or dissection for a physician. There is no valid reason why it should not be considered a part of the preparation in the teacher's case as essential as the practical work in the other cases, and insisted on as such by those who employ teachers.

I have already hinted at the fact that living in a country and studying practically the language and life of the people is by no means the same thing as living there and devoting one's self to scientific study. In fact the two things are more or less antagonistic. The more a person sees of the various sides of life in a foreign country, the less time he has in which to shut himself up with his books, and *vice versa*. The conscientious American student is rather prone to make the mistake of giving relatively too much time to his books, and thereby missing the stimulus of intellectual fellowship, which is so great an element in European universities, but which our students cannot avail themselves of unless they reduce the book study

for the first semester to a minimum, and devote themselves to getting *en rapport* with the social side of life and the language as a practical matter. After a student has done this, and not till then, he is ready to say whether it is better for him to make his special studies abroad or at home. In most cases it will be found that it makes surprisingly little difference. There are on both sides of the water competent professors and ample libraries;<sup>1</sup> the work to be done by the student is largely the same wherever he is, and it is generally a question chiefly of individual instruction and the accessibility of material. In general, the Germans excel in thoroughness, and the Americans in economy of work. The student learns in Germany to shrink from no amount of work that is necessary to get to the bottom of a matter, and learns in America to eliminate intelligently that which is unnecessary. Both habits are valuable, and study in both countries is valuable for the purpose of forming both habits. An American, however, who goes to Germany without sufficient maturity and individuality to steer his own course, is very liable to fall under the influence of German methods of work to such an extent as to put him under a disadvantage when he comes back to work under American conditions.

A thorough and safe course would be somewhat as follows: Let a student, having given due attention to the modern languages as an undergraduate, go to Berlin or Paris and spend a year as much as possible among the people and away from other Americans, reading newspapers more than text-books, but hearing lectures and cultivating the society of the native students, and learning how things are done at the university. Then let him come home and take a thorough course in his subject at a good American university for a year or two, and finally go back and prepare his thesis under a German professor, or do some original work of a scholarly kind, and at the same time put the final touches on his practical knowledge of the language he is to teach.

Such a course would cover the essential points which I have emphasized, as far as any course of study can do it. Of course after all, teachers are born and not made, and the talent for imparting knowledge must be assumed at the outset. There is no way to prove its possession except a record of successful teaching. A bachelor's degree from a reputable American institution is some guarantee of a proper amount of general culture, and of an adequate knowledge of English, while such a course of foreign study as I have indicated answers for a scientific and practical knowledge of the language to be taught.

It seems to me that the time has now come when those who employ modern-language teachers may insist upon the thoroughness of preparation

<sup>1</sup>As things are now organized in Europe, there are better opportunities there for students of the Germanic than of the Romance languages, and it is therefore entirely natural that more graduate students are found at American universities in the latter subject than in the former.

which I have outlined, and on the other hand that teachers may insist upon such compensation as makes it worth while to attain such preparation.

Professor H. C. G. Brandt offered the following resolution :

*Resolved*, That the Modern Language Association of America unite with the Philological Society of England and with the American Philological Association in recommending the joint rules for amended spelling and the alphabetical list of amended words published in the *Transactions of the American Philological Association* and in the *Century Dictionary*.

The resolution was discussed by Professors J. W. Bright, F. A. March, A. N. Brown, J. E. Matzke, H. E. Greene, H. C. G. von Jagemann, E. H. Magill and J. W. Pearce.

It being understood that the resolution meant no more than an approval of the efforts being made towards an ultimate revision of present English spelling, the resolution was adopted.

16. A Study of the Middle English Poem, *The Pystal of Susan*; its MSS., Dialect, Authorship and Style: Introductory to a collated Text and Glossary. By Dr. T. P. Harrison, of the Johns Hopkins University.

The work on this poem is preparatory to editing a critical text of it, which as yet has never been published. The three MSS. in which the poem is found were first discussed, from which, supported by other conditions, the date of composition of the poem was placed in the latter half of the fourteenth century. The subject of the poem is the apocryphal story of Susanna and the Elders, based not upon the Septuagint, but, as was shown, upon the version of Theodotion, with certain original additions by the author.

In discussing the question of authorship, the article by Trautmann in *Anglia*, I, was considered. The result reached in that article that Huchown, mentioned by Andrew of Wynton, was the author of the *Pystal of Susan* was adopted, as was also that ascribing to the same author the *Morte Arthure*. All other poems that have been ascribed to Huchown were excluded. Arguments showing remarkable coincidences between Huchown and Sir Hugh of Eglinton, tending to establish the identity of the two persons, were given.

The dialect in which the poem was originally written, although much obscured by copying, was considered to be that of the far north. This is shown in words and forms preserved by the rime and occasionally in